



As we reflect on the COVID-19 Coronavirus situation unfolding around the world, here's a few things we'd like you to keep in mind:

1) Remember the Truth. As the COVID-19 Coronavirus spreads, we must fight to remember a host of truths. We are weak (2 Cor. 12:9). Life is short (Ja. 4:14). Our lives are not our own (1 Cor. 6:19). God is the only treasure that lasts (Phil. 1:21; Mt. 13:44, 45-46). Nothing happens outside his loving, wise, and good sovereign reach—even disease and death (Dt. 32:39; 1 Sam. 2:6; Job 1:20-21; Ja. 4:13-16).

2) Pray Fervently. God is our refuge and strength, a present helper in all kinds of trouble (Ps 46:1). So, let's go to Him, asking for help.

3) Gather Faithfully. For 2000 years, local churches have faithfully gathered during the most difficult seasons imaginable. With God's help, we will continue to do just that. We are called to display to the world what it looks like when a people hope and trust in a sovereign God rather than themselves. Until there are clear and prudent reasons to make changes to this biblical norm, we will continue to live faithfully as Christians in a fallen world and gather with God's people regularly.

4) Exercise Caution. That said, people who are at higher risk of illness may want to consider ways to lower their risk of infection by limiting contact with crowds, including those: (1) over 60 years old, or (2) with underlying health conditions such as heart disease and lung disease, or (3) with weakened immune systems. If you, or a family member, have a cough, fever, or other respiratory difficulties, we encourage you to refrain from participating in any church-related activity until you are fever-free for 24 hours.

5) Communicate with the Elders. If for one of the above reasons you believe you should refrain from gathering with us for a season, please communicate that with the elders so we know how to pray for

6) Follow Basic Hygiene & Sanitization Guidelines. This sounds simple, but according to the CDC it is the most important preventative measure. Wash your hands with soap and water. Often. In addition, please consider bringing your own hand sanitizer to services. In addition, we will be making extra efforts to wipe down and sanitize hard surfaces before and after services.

7) A Word to Parents. We will be taking extra measures within the NextGen Ministry to wipe down hard surfaces (handles, toys, dispensers, etc.) before, during, and after our gatherings. Please grab a flyer by the kids' check-in for more information on what we're doing.

8) Be Faithful, not Fearful. In his 1948 essay *On Living in an Atomic Age*, C.S. Lewis offered some valuable counsel about faithfulness amidst cultural panic. For perspective, I've replaced his references to the bombs with references to the virus:

This is the first point to be made: and the first action to be taken is to pull ourselves together. If we are all going to be destroyed by [the Coronavirus], let that [virus] when it comes find us doing sensible and human things—praying, working, teaching, reading, listening to music, bathing the children, playing tennis, chatting to our friends . . .—not huddled together like frightened sheep and thinking about [viruses]. They may break our bodies (a microbe can do that) but they need not dominate our minds.

We certainly don't want you to be worried about this, just prudent. And we want you to know that we are thinking ahead and taking some easy, common-sense steps as the situation dictates. Above all, even as we try to exercise wisdom in these circumstances, we trust in our sovereign God that He is working all things according to the counsel of His will and that He is in absolute control.

Christ Is All

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